
Daniel Blow. *Shah Abbas. The Ruthless King Who Became an Iranian Legend*

Jean Calmard

**Electronic version**

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/abstractairanica/40647>

DOI: 10.4000/abstractairanica.40647

ISSN: 1961-960X

Publisher:

CNRS (UMR 7528 Mondes iraniens et indiens), Éditions de l'IFRI

Printed version

Date of publication: 1 December 2013

ISSN: 0240-8910

Electronic reference

Jean Calmard, « Daniel Blow. *Shah Abbas. The Ruthless King Who Became an Iranian Legend* », *Abstracta Iranica* [Online], Volume 32-33 | 2013, document 234, Online since 01 July 2016, connection on 03 October 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/abstractairanica/40647> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/abstractairanica.40647>

This text was automatically generated on 3 October 2020.

Tous droits réservés

Daniel Blow. *Shah Abbas. The Ruthless King Who Became an Iranian Legend*

Jean Calmard

REFERENCES

Daniel Blow. *Shah Abbas. The Ruthless King Who Became an Iranian Legend*. London-New York, I.B. Tauris, 2009, 247 p., illustrations in black white and colors, bibl., index.

- 1 According to the author's preface, "this book addresses the general reader". Blow pays homage to the "immense amount of scholarly work" done on the Safavid period over the past three or four decades. While concentrating on the eventful history of Shah Abbas, this book encompasses, in twenty chapters, the whole span of Safavid history from "Shah Abbas's inheritance: The birth of a Shi'i state" (chapter 1) to "The later Safavids" (chapter 20). Reflecting recent scholarship, this biography fills a gap in Iranian history, but it is not devoid of shortcomings, approximations and errors. From the outset, no mention is made of the "takeover" by Ṣafī al-Dīn (founder of the Safawiyya) of the Zahediyya heritage; nor of the enrichment of the Safawiyya from the beginning, not only thanks to "generous donations" (p. 1-2). Curses on "the first three caliphs" (p. 4) did not spare the Ottomans. Nothing is said about the origin (the Mar'ašīs of Māzandarān) of Šāh 'Abbās's mother, Mahd-e Owliyā (p. 16, 22, 24, 48). The comment on 'Abbās's conduct toward Jews, whom he compelled to wear "a visible warning" (p. 233), makes no mention of his cruelty toward their "mullas". Despite its defects (See the full review in *St. Ir.* 40/1, 2011), this well-written, agreeably illustrated book amounts to more than an ordinary biography of a great Persian king.

AUTHORS

JEAN CALMARD

CNRS – EPHE, Paris